

1607/452 (2) 2

TO THE
PLAGUES OF EGYPT,

BY A

School-Boy Thirteen Years of Age.

I.

DESCEND ye great Pierian nine,
Or rather thou, O! heavenly dove,
Who the great Milton didst inspire:
Descend O! holy spirit from above,
Inflame me with a spark divine
Of bright celestial fire;
For O! how arduous is the task,
What great abilities it asks,
To sing the awful plagues GOD brought on Egypt's
land,
By the great son of Amram's hand?

II.

Rouse up my muse, awake and sing,
Bind to thy lute a dreadful string,
Sing how when Mitzraim's king
Refus'd to obey JEHOVAH's hand,
And at his dread commands did scoff,

Not

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Nor would let his people go,
But drown'd their offspring and enhanc'd their woe.

JEHOVAH in his mighty wrath,
Sent numerous awful plagues upon his land;
He scourg'd him with an iron rod:
In vain with impious prayers did Pharaoh seek
To bulls or leeks:

How cou'd the fool think bulls or leeks
Could save him from the almighty God!

III.

Methinks, enraptur'd in my glorious theme,
I see the bush in flame,
And yet unhurt appear:
The furious fire did not dare
To scorch a single leaf when GOD was there:
I hear JEHOVAH send him into Egypt's land,
And he obeys the great command.

IV.

Help me, O! GOD! O! JESUS help me sing
These wonders, that from thee did spring;
'Twas thou, 'twas thou that didst transform the rod
Into a crocodile,
Like those of famous Nile;

Stupendous work performable alone by GOD.
Thou didst indeed permit the devil to transform.
The wizards stick into a serpents form;
But Moses's, that was created by thy power,
Did soon the proud magicians snakes devour.

V. Still!

V.

Still! still unmov'd the haughty king remains
Which doth JEHOVAH's wrath provoke:
He bids the son of Amram lift the wand,
And give the dreadful stroke:
The son of Amram at the great command,
Stands on the rivers brink,
And lifts aloft the awful rod:
He finites the purling flood,
That laves proud Egypt's plains;
And lo! the guilty waves
That dar'd to cheer GOD's enemies with drink,
Blush'd at their fault and redden'd into blood.

VI.

But still un-aw'd the tyrant wont repent,
Nor will his harden'd heart relent,
And let the people go:
Moses lifts up the avenging rod,
Commanded by an angry GOD;
And lo! the waters at a monstrous birth,
Pour out the croaking frogs,
Whole millions rise from all the lakes and bogs,
Leap from the Nile and skip along the earth.
At length grown bold and proud, they scorn the
humble ground,
In court and stately domes their lordships now are found:
Undaunted they e'en climb the royal bed,
And with the tyrant's dainties and ragoats are fed.

VII. Moses

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VII.

Moses again at JAH's command,
Lifts the avenging rod up in his hand,
And finites the ground;
And lo! the very dust enliven'd at the blow,
Is found to move and into vermin grow:
God when provok'd, can make the least, the meanest
thing
Torment, or death upon the wicked bring.
He lice as well as elephants can use,
To punish those who do his church abuse.

VIII.

Thus when proud Hatto* did the beggars kill,
And liken'd them to rats that did good victuals steal;
The rats to which he did compare the poor,
His haughty carcase quickly did devour;
No refuge by him could be found,
In vain with fire or water did they him surround,
Thro' all they rush'd, and gave the fatal wound.

IX.

O! adamantine Pharaoh, is thy heart yet hard?
Can nought thy impious course retard?
Infectious flies shall then thy court infest,
Swarm in each window, in each corner nest,
Fly blow and mute upon thy meat,
Feed on thy victuals and thy dainties eat.

* Archbishop of Mentz. See Turner on Providence.

X. Now

X.

Now for the owners crimes the cattle die,
O'er Zoan's plains the putrid bodies lie;
The beasts that dar'd to serve their makers foes,
Now for it bear unnumber'd woes:
Nor can their idols boasted power,
In this unhappy hour,
Save his own self from death:
Great Apis reclines
His fainting head, upon his golden shrines,
And bellows forth a mournful groan,
Falls on the clay cold pavement prone,
Yawns ghastly and resigns his breath.

XI.

But as the Pharian nation still were unconcern'd,
Tho' with the fierce disease their cattle burn'd:
And as the tyrant who did reign,
Over the Nile water'd plains,
Still detain'd in slavery
The heaven belov'd Thariadæ*.
The almighty chang'd the punishment,
And the fierce plagues and ulcers sore,
Which did torment the brutes before,
Upon Mitzraims impious sons he sent.

* Thariadæ, the children of Israel so called from Terah
the father of Abraham. Dr. JOHNSTON, Ps. cv. 42.

XII. Altho'

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XII.

[move,

Altho' their flesh is pain'd, their hearts yet will not
 They seem'd resolv'd GOD's utmost wrath to prove :
 Then hear ye rebels, hear, th'almighty GOD
 Sends forth his thundring voice ;
 He rains down hail and fire from his august abode,
 Swift o'er Canopus* rolls th'astounding noise,
 Lightenings illumine all the skies :
 Struck with fear and wild amaze,
 Th' Egyptians gaze,
 To see all heaven burning in one monstrous blaze :
 The tyrant on his very throne
 Shock, and was forc'd GOD's power to own.
 And now his haughty face look'd pale,
 And even seem'd as white as hail ;
 And then again thro' shame 'twould glow,
 Like the fierce fires that made it redden so.

XIII.

Thus rag'd the storm and wide destruction spread,
 Broke the tall oaks, struck the strong bullocks dead.
 But as the wax tho' melted by the sun,
 When he's withdrawn doth cease to run ;
 So as the storm did cease, the king grew hard again,
 And would the race of Abraham detain,
 Unfreed from slav'ry's galling chain ;
 And still he did defile
 [Nile,
 With Hebrew infants blood thy waves O barbarous

* JUV. SAT. I. 126.

XIV. To

XIV.

To scourge th' unhumbled monarch, now appear
 Legions of locusts coming thro' the air ;
 Soon tow' rds the earth they fly with downward
 course,
 And 'gainst the vegetable world employ their force ;
 Much devastation had the hail-storm made,
 Tall cedars in the dust the thunder laid.
 But these voracious eat up every green,
 Nor cou'd a single herb be seen ;
 The half ripe crop the locusts eat,
 The Bruchus * made each herb its meat,
 So that a single plant could scarce be found
 In the Pelusian † ground.

XV.

Dark was the air when locusts it o'erspread,
 But as that cou'd not move the haughty king,
 By Moses now the LORD did bring,
 On Egypt's guilty plains
 Still darker glooms, and night more dread ;
 So that Egypt now might vie,
 So great was its confusion and obscurity,
 With the terrific realm, o'er which old Chaos reigns.

* Bruchus, an insect like a locust eating herbs.

Dr. JOHNSTON, Ps. lxxviii. 46.

† Pelusian, from Pelusium one of the mouths of the Nile.

Dr. JOHNSTON, Ps. lxxviii. 44.

XVI. Till

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XVI.

Till now, with milder means JEHOVAH try'd
To bring down Egypt's and her monarch's pride,
But milder means with him were vain,
For pride and hell did o'er him reign :
Then since 'tis so, behold ! the heavens rend,
God doth the avenging seraph send.
To obey the heavenly mandate swift as flame he flies,
Dark clouds convey him thro' the skies ;
Borne on which he doth descend,
Unto the plains the seven-mouth Nile doth lave,
And in each first-born's breast his shining weapon
sheathe :
Conquer'd at last by this amazing woe,
The tyrant lets the race of Terah go.

Northampton April 7, 1766.



